



BASE OPS SAFETY BULLETIN COMMAND SAFETY OFFICE

Jan-Feb 07

Special Points of Interest

Reduce Employee Exposure: Personal Protective Equipment

• Cold Weather precautions.

• Fall Protection – Frequently Asked Questions

Safety problem?
Call 531-2536/1981

OSHA requires employers to use personal protective equipment (PPE) to reduce employee exposure to hazards when engineering and administrative controls are not adequate. Employers are required to determine all exposures to hazards in their workplace and determine if PPE should be used to protect their workers. Before employees ever begin working on a job site, the employer must first evaluate the hazards involved with each specific task. When complying with PPE requirements, follow this simple checklist:

Do a work place walk-through and look for hazards (including potential hazards) in all employees' work spaces and work place operating procedures.

Consider engineering, administrative, and/or work practice methods to control the hazard first. Identify those existing/potential hazards and tasks that require PPE.

Select the appropriate PPE to match the hazards and protect employees.

Communicate PPE selection to each at-risk employee. Provide properly fitting PPE to each employee required to use it.

Train employees to make sure they understand the elements of the PPE training.

Test employees to make sure they understand the elements of the PPE training.

Follow up to evaluate effectiveness of PPE use, training, policies, etc. against the hazards at your workplace.

- Have all employees been trained?
- Are all employees using their PPE properly and following PPE policies and procedures?
- Are supervisors enforcing use of required PPE?
- Has anything changed at your workplace (e.g., fewer injuries/illnesses)?

After the completion of this simple checklist, employees should be ready to begin the job safely and be adequately protected from exposure to existing or potential hazards.

Cold Weather Precautions

As we have entered the fall season I thought it would be a good time to discuss some precautions to take with the upcoming cooler weather. Many times during the workday we are required to spend working in cooler environments.

Usually the body can naturally produce enough heat to keep warm and function normally. However, sometimes extremely cold temperatures can cause the body to lose heat faster than it can be produced. The body reacts by directing blood to the vital organs, leaving hands and feet feeling cold. If the body temperature continues to drop, shivering starts to help generate heat. A further drop in body temperature can cause tissue or organ damage, and even death.

Common Effects Caused by Cold Temperatures

1. Feet and legs become cold, pale, and numb and sweating stops; then feet turn red and swell. Blood vessel and nerve injuries are frequent. Get into a warm temperature and change out wet clothing to avoid injury.





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2. Frostbite occurs after exposure to very cold temperatures. The skin becomes pale and glossy, blisters may appear, gangrene may set in, and when warmed, swelling may occur. These injuries may range from minor to severe and in some instances results in amputation or death. If these symptoms are observed, seek medical attention. Do not rub the effected areas in an attempt to warm.

3. Hypothermia is the body's inability to keep its core temperature above 98 degrees F. Hands and feet become cold, and finally numb. Severe shivering begins, and it is this shivering that marks the real first sign of hypothermia. Other signs are difficulty with speech, forgetfulness, and drowsiness. If these symptoms are observed, the body the body must be warmed immediately, death could follow quickly.

Preventive Measures for Dealing with Cold Temperatures

1. Know the symptoms of cold-related disorders
2. Drink hot liquids, avoid alcohol and smoking

3. Wear layered clothing starting with thermal underwear, an insulating layer next, outer garments that repel wind and water, head and ear coverings, warm and waterproof boots, and warm gloves.

4. Add or remove layers according to changes in the weather and/or workload; make sure clothing is not tight enough to cut off circulation, and keep dry As you can see it is important to take precautions when working in cooler weather. Remember you can always take layers of clothing off when needed.



Fall Protection – Frequently Asked Questions

Can there be a painted stripe on the roof for a warning line?

Painted lines are a problem in a snow belt and obviously where aggregate is on the roof. I prefer painted lines for permit required roof access. The raised warning line is a system designed to get the attention of someone backing into an opening or toward an edge. Roofers are notorious for backward walking while unrolling their material and may not see a line painted on the roof. But in some situations, a painted stripe or walk path can be used as fall protection.

Should tool belts be worn under or over full body harnesses?

Raising tools separate from the worker is sometimes safer and easier on the worker. If you must wear both, harnesses go on first. Tool belts should not impede the movement of harness straps during a fall and should not turn into a waist belt that could damage stomach organs in the fall arrest and subsequent suspension.



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Is fall protection required for inspections or assessments of roofs?

First, 29 CFR 1926 Subpart M does not require fall protection for those conducting the initial inspection of the roof to determine what work needs to be done. Section 1926.500(a) states, "This subpart sets forth requirements and criteria for fall protection in construction workplaces covered under 29 CFR Part 1926. Exception: The provisions of this subpart do not apply when employees are making an inspection, investigation, or assessment of workplace conditions prior to the actual start of construction work or after all construction work has been completed." It goes on to state that if inspections are made while construction operations are underway, all employees who are exposed to fall hazards while performing inspections must be protected as required by Subpart M. Exception: The provisions of this subpart do not apply when employees are making an inspection, investigation, or assessment of workplace conditions prior to the actual start of construction work or after all construction work has been completed." It goes on to state that if inspections are made while construction operations are underway, all employees who are exposed to fall hazards while performing inspections must be protected as required by Subpart M. in 1926.502(f)(2), no work or work-related activity is to take place in the area between the warning line and the edge without the use of conventional fall protection, and the employer effectively implements a work rule prohibiting the employees from going past the warning line without the use of conventional fall protection.



Can trades other than roofing, residential, pre-cast erection, or leading edge work use a warning line as fall protection?

Yes, the use of warning lines for all other trades is acceptable when they are set back a minimum of 15 feet from the edge, the warning line meets or exceeds the requirements in 1926.502(f)(2), no work or work-related activity is to take place in the area between the warning line and the edge without the use of conventional fall protection, and the employer effectively implements a work rule prohibiting the employees from going past the warning line without the use of conventional fall protection.

**Gennie Gantt
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